

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information providing system to provide information of an information provider stored in a network server to an information seeker, the network server, comprising:

a memory portion to store information of the information provider;

a key conferring means to confer a security key to a first information seeker whom the information provider permits the access to his information, and to confer another security key to a second information seeker provided that the first information seeker permits the second information seeker to directly obtain information from the information provider;

a key checking means to check whether or not the security keys fed by the first and second information seekers are authorized, and to determine whether or not information should be provided to the given information seeker; and

an information searching/acquiring means to fetch information required by the first and second information seeker from the storage portion as nominated by the security key.

2. The information providing system according to claim 1, wherein the storage portion comprises a plurality of storage areas, and the first and second information seekers can gain access only to the storage areas selected by the information provider out of the plurality of storage areas.

3. The information providing system according to claim 1, wherein the information comprises at least image data, and character data related with characters in the image data.

4. An information providing method for providing information of an information provider stored in a network server to an information seeker via a network, comprising the steps of:

storing information of the information provider in the network server;

conferring a security key to a first information seeker whom the information provider permits the access to his information, and conferring another security key to a second information seeker provided that the first information seeker permits the second information seeker to directly obtain information from the information provider;

checking whether or not the security keys fed by the first and second information seekers are authorized, and determining whether or not information should be provided to a given information seeker; and

fetching, if it is determined that provision of information to the information seeker is acceptable, information required by the first and second information seeker from the storage portion as nominated by the security key.

5. A storing medium for storing a computer program necessary for causing a computer system to execute the information providing method according to claim 4.

6. An electronic mailing system for allowing electronic mails to be exchanged between network terminals connected with each other via a network, the network terminal, comprising:

an image processing means to process an image on a display used for

preparing an electronic mail;

a compressing means to compress a file obtained from the electronic mail containing the processed image; and

a depressing means to depress the compressed file.

7. The electronic mailing system according to claim 6, wherein each means comprises a software package respectively, and a transmitting network terminal is provided with an initial mail transmitting means to transmit those software packages.

8. The electronic mailing system according to claim 6, wherein the network terminal is provided with a mailing history displaying means to display the history of exchanged electronic mails.

9. The electronic mailing system according to claims 6, wherein the network terminal is provided with an image display switching means to switch the display mode of an image from enlarged display to contracted display and vice versa.

10. An electronic mail transmitting/receiving method for transmitting/receiving an electronic mail to/from a network terminal connected via a network, comprising the steps of :

processing an image on a display used for preparing an electronic mail to prepare an electronic mail;

compressing a file obtained from the electronic mail containing the processed image before the electronic mail is transmitted from a transmitting network terminal; and

depressing the compressed file, after the file is received by a receiving network terminal.

11. A computer program to cause a computer system to execute the electronic mail transmitting/receiving method according to claim 10.

12. A parts check list preparing system, comprising:

a means to store a database comprising the graphics data of a layout of a part, and the parts data of the part;

a means to fetch the graphics data of a part necessary for preparing a parts check list;

a means to cause a layout reproduced from the graphics data of the part to be presented on display;

a means to select the part in the layout;

a means to fetch the parts data corresponding with the graphics data of the selected part from the database;

a means to arrange the parts data into a list, and to cause the list to be presented on display together with the layout; and

a means to automatically prepare the parts check list based on the parts list.

13. The parts check list preparing system according to claim 12 comprising a network server and a network terminal connected with each other via a network, the network server, comprising:

(A) a server's memory means to store the title of layouts of parts, the graphics data of the layouts, and the parts data of those parts;

(B) a layout title acquiring means to acquire the title of a layout

arbitrarily chosen by the network terminal;

(C) an information searching means to search through the server's memory means for the graphics data corresponding with the acquired title of the layout, and the parts data of the part reproduced from the graphics data of the layout title;

(D) an output delivering means to deliver, as output, the searched graphics data and parts data to the network terminal, and to cause the display device of the network terminal to present the layout reproduced from the graphics data,

and the network terminal comprising:

(a) a terminal's memory means to store the graphics data and parts data provided by the network server;

(b) a layout data acquiring means to acquire the graphics data of a part selected from the layout displayed on the terminal's display device;

(c) a parts list preparing means to search through the terminal's memory means for the parts data corresponding with the graphics data just acquired;

(d) a parts list delivering means to deliver the parts data thus acquired to the display device, and to insert the parts data into the parts list displayed together with the layout; and

(e) a parts check list preparing means to prepare a parts check list based on the part data in the parts list.

14. The parts check list preparing system according to claim 13, the network terminal comprising a duplicate acquisition preventing means to cause, if the network terminal selects the parts data of any one of plural parts, and the parts data of an assembly composed of those plural parts, the

network terminal to obtain only the parts data of the assembly.

15. The parts check list preparing system according to claim 13,  
wherein the server's memory means stores a price table containing price data of each part, and a storage table containing a storage data of each part; and

wherein the network server comprises a response preparing means which searches through the price table and storage table for the price data and storage data of the parts listed in the parts check list, and makes the parts check list reflect the search result.

16. The parts check list preparing system according to claim 13,  
wherein at least two network servers different in communication distances to the network terminal are introduced; and

wherein the network terminal gains access to a network server shorter in communication distance.

17. The parts check list preparing system according to claim 16,  
wherein the network server shorter in communication distance checks whether or not any alteration is introduced in the graphics data and/or parts data stored in the network server longer in communication distance; and

wherein it updates its own graphics data and/or parts data in accordance with the alteration whenever it finds an alteration is introduced.

18. The parts check list preparing system according to claim 12, wherein the part is a constitutive element of a construction machine.

19. A parts check list preparing method, comprising the steps of:  
in addition to fetching the graphics data of a part necessary for preparing a parts check list from a database comprising the graphics data of parts and the parts data thereof, causing a display device to present a layout based on said graphics data on display;  
after selecting the part in the layout on display, fetching the parts data corresponding with the graphics data of the selected part from the database;  
arranging the acquired parts data into a list and causing the display device to present the list together with the layout; and  
automatically preparing a parts check list based on the parts list.

20. A computer program for causing a computer system to execute the parts check list preparing method according to claim 19.

21. An information storing system, comprising:  
an image data acquiring means to acquire information on a printed document as image data;  
a character data feeding means to feed, as input, character data related with a character contained in the image data;  
a character reading means to read the character in the acquired image data; and  
a memory means to store a conversion table whereby the character read by the character reading means, and the character data corresponding with the read character are mutually convertible.

22. The information storing system according to claim 21, comprising:  
a nominating means to nominate the character on an image

reproduced from the image data;

a nominated position determining means to determine the position  
nominated by the nominating means on the image as coordinate data;

a character position determining means to determine the position of  
the character nominated by the nominated means on the image reproduced  
from the image data as coordinate data; and

an output delivering means to fetch, from the memory means, the  
character data of the character having approximately the same coordinate  
data as the coordinate data determined by the nominated position  
determining means;

and wherein the memory means stores, in addition to the conversion  
table, another conversion table whereby the character and the coordinate  
data corresponding with the character are mutually convertible.

23. The information storing system according to claim 22, wherein the  
coordinate data obtained by the character position determining means occur  
as data to define a two-dimensional area surrounding the character.

24. The information storing system according to claim 21, comprising:  
a nominating means to nominate the character data displayed as an  
image;

a character data determining means to determine the character data  
nominated by the nominating means;

a character position determining means to determine the position of  
the character on the image reproduced from the image data as coordinate



data;

an output delivering means to fetch, from the memory means, the coordinate data of a character the same with the character represented by the character data determined by the character data determining means;

and wherein the memory means stores, in addition to the conversion table, another conversion table whereby the character and the coordinate data corresponding with the character are mutually convertible.

25. An information storing method, comprising the steps of:

acquiring information on a printed document as image data;

feeding, as input, character data related with a character in the image data;

reading the character in the acquired image data; and

storing the character read by the character reading means, and the character data corresponding with the thus read character with the two kinds of data kept interrelated.

26. A computer program for causing a computer system to execute the information storing method according to claim 25.